

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Wyoming Ag in the Classroom to recognize 2008 Exemplary Educators

Three Wyoming educators have been chosen as the recipients of Wyoming Ag in the Classroom's (WAIC) 2008 awards.

2008 Advocate for Agriculture Award

Joey Johnson has been an agriculture education instructor and FFA advisor for eleven years. In that time, he also taught animal science and coached the Northwest College Livestock Judging Team from 2001 to 2004. He started working at the Meeteetse schools in the fall of 2005 where the agriculture program only had nine active members. Within two years, he built the program to 33 FFA members. This is impressive considering the town of Meeteetse only has a population of 351. Johnson has been invaluable in his creative approach to bringing in people from the community to teach students about real life applications of agriculture.

2008 Teacher of the Year Awards

Virginia Wright has been an educator in the Niobrara County School District for two years. She teaches General Science, College Science, and Environmental Science as well as being a Special Educational Assistant. Virginia is also the faculty sponsor for the NCHS Chapter of the National Honor Society. For six years prior to her arrival in Lusk, Wright taught Physics, Chemistry, Environmental Chemistry, and Ecology at Wright Jr./Sr. High School. Prior to teaching, Virginia worked with her husband on the family ranch north of Douglas, WY. She is presently working on her Master's Degree in Natural Science, scheduled to be completed in 2008. Virginia continues to work with her husband on the ranch and share her love of the great outdoors with her grandchildren.

"If you can imagine it, you can achieve it; if you dream it, you can become it." This is a very powerful quote that **Danielle Cox-Kunkel**, stresses to her students' every day. As a Laramie High School teacher and the Snowy Range FFA advisor, Cox-Kunkel feels privileged to be able to educate and help prepare her students for the future. Her goal is to educate students so they are able to intelligently talk about and address the many issues that agriculture faces in the world today and in the future.

A Wyoming native, Cox-Kunkel grew up in Hillsdale, WY. She attributes much of her success to her parents Kim and Therese Cox. They instilled in her, and her siblings, the value of hard work and a love for agriculture. A 1997 graduate of Burns High School, Danielle played a very active role in her school, community, and FFA Chapter. In her free time, she enjoys reading books, cooking, spending time with family, and traveling with her husband Paul.

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